

Abreast of the Times

sensible habits, he may have learned to abandon casual methods, and formed some definite plan. At the dawn of the new star he was, perhaps, refreshing his memory of the ancient classics, or examining some historical period, or probing into the secrets of science, or trying to reach the heart of a great poem, or studying with more exact and reverent attention the words of Him of Nazareth. And in that case, his lack of eager desire to hear some new thing, even though he may carry it to an obstinate extreme, cannot at least be attributed to intellectual indifference. Herr Teufelsdröckh made a laborious attempt to read the Canonical Books of the Dandiacal Body ; but "In vain," he says, "I summoned my whole energies and did my very utmost ; at the end of some short space I was uniformly seized with not so much what I can call a drumming in my ears, as a kind of insufferable Jew's-harping and scrannel-piping there ; to which the